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THEOSOPHY

A MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, AND THE BROTHERHOOD OF HUMANITY

THE STUDY OF OCCULT SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY, AND ARYAN LITERATURE

Vol. XLVI—No. 8 **June, 1958**

WHEN the Theosophists and Occultists say that God is no Being, *for* It *is nothing,* No-Thing, *they are more reverential and religiously respectful to the Deity than those who call God a* He, *and thus make of Him a gigantic Male. The Logos or Creative deity, the "Word made Flesh," of every religion, has to be traced to its ultimate source and Essence. Chaos-Theos-Kosmos, the triple deity, is all in all. Therefore, it is said to be male and female, good and evil, positive and negative: the whole series of contrasted qualities.*

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

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(*a*) To form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or color;

(*b*) The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and

(*c*) The investigation of the unexplained laws of Nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

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A U M

For the sake of the soul alone, the Universe exists.
—PATANJALI

THEOSOPHY

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SIGNS OF THE CYCLE

IT is natural, during the present phase of the interim cycle—the cycle which lies between 1875 and 1975—to compare the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. For the past ten years, for example, students have watched closely for events that might be seen as paralleling the "psychism" of a hundred years ago, which was concentrated in the Spiritualist movement. But while, in the present century, there seemed to be some renewed activity in Spiritualism, even before 1948, there has been nothing like the outburst of mediumistic phenomena which astonished the world of a hundred years before. It became apparent that the "psychism" of the twentieth century would not be so easily identified, and that its expression would find more diverse channels of expression.

In the first place, it is reasonable to suggest that the Theosophical Movement has exerted a broad influence on the mind of the times, such that the psychism of the present may emerge in the context of better philosophical understanding. It is certain, at least, that the program of research undertaken years ago at Duke University by Dr. William McDougall, and pursued with great competence by Dr. J. B. Rhine, has instituted needed disciplines in psychic investigations, and both McDougall and Rhine have laid clear emphasis on the philosophical implications of psychic phenomena in their writings. Meanwhile, the sensational and vulgar side of psychism has had varied manifestations, most noticeable of which has been the popularity of hypnotic experiments and exhibitions, culminating a few years ago in the dramatic "Bridey Murphy" episode.

More fundamental, perhaps, if less capable of sharp definition, is the rapidly spreading interest in "psychology" and in every aspect of

the study of "personality"—a development felt in the schools, the churches, and manifest in numerous little sects and groups which give attention to this new interest of human beings in themselves. The problems of mental health, which are related to other phases of the present cycle, form another way in which the psychic developments of this period are finding expression.

One conclusion may be drawn almost at once: the psychism of our time is closely connected with an awakening intellectuality, and is by no means limited to the phenomenalistic manifestations characteristic of the last century. The Spiritualists who gain attention are not simply mediums who are able to produce dramatic phenomena, but mediums—such as Mrs. Eileen Garrett, editor of *Tomorrow*—who display more of a philosophical than a religious interest in the supernormal. On the religious side, in another sense, there has been a manifest growth of attention to "meditation" and to the Oriental religions in which psychological disciplines play a central role. The interest in Zen Buddhism, for example, has assumed the proportions of a "wave" of activity, affecting many levels of society, from the "hipster" poets who make free with the Zen idiom in their rather incomprehensible and often offensive verse, to serious psychologists who find in the Zen concept of inner perception a radical outpost of modern theories of knowledge.

Paralleling these developments is the gradual change in the human sense of what is "important" or "real." Men who twenty or thirty years ago would probably have been drawn into theoretical physics—as the field where the most exciting encounters might be expected—are now going into psychology and sociology. Not matter, but *mind,* is the center of attention. Entire rivers of thought, turbulent with the originality of men who are the successors to the founders of the psychoanalytical movement, are transforming attitudes toward human problems. A book like Ira Progoff's *Death and Rebirth of Psychology* is impressive evidence of the revolution in thinking about the mind that has taken place since the time of Sigmund Freud.

While, a generation ago, psychologists were contemptuous of philosophy and wholly indifferent to mysticism, the new leaders in the science of mind are now advocating studies in metaphysical and mystical religion. The old-fashioned materialism of the nineteenth century, with which H. P. Blavatsky had to contend, is now almost entirely a thing of the past. It remains, of course, as a habitual attitude on the part of those trained in the sciences, but men of intellectual vigor and

contemporary interests now reflect a very different mood. The argument between idealism and materialism was not exactly "won" by either side; instead, more vital issues have taken the stage.

Concurrently with these unfolding tendencies, and urging them on, have been the multiple effects of the wars of the twentieth century. In particular, World War II, culminating in the detonation of the atom bomb, with subsequent development of nuclear weapons, brought a quality of desperation to modern thinking. War has added the provocative of agonized decision to the thought of serious men and women everywhere in the world. This has been a strong influence in removing the initiative of thinking from the "academic" sort of philosophy and social science. The men who are today "fired up" by the urgency of human problems are men who have felt the impact of Gandhian philosophy and action in India, and who sense the futility of old-style "politics" and programs of either revolution or reform. In the field of social action, today, men like Vinoba of India, and Martin Luther King in the United States, are getting serious attention. The emphasis in the lives of these men is upon practical brotherhood, rather than upon any familiar ideological approach to human problems.

It is not too much to say that, since the last quarter of the nineteenth century, a new "center of gravity" has been emerging in human thought. The battlefield of ideas is a different one, the issues are different, and the challenge to the intelligent portion of the population more clear.

This is a time when students of Theosophy will do well to re-read with special attention such writings of H. P. Blavatsky as the *Five Messages to the American Theosophists* and the closing section of *The Key to Theosophy.* It might be beneficial, also, to read such contemporary writers as Lewis Mumford (*In the Name of Sanity*) and C. Wright Mills' article in the Nation for March 8, "A Pagan Sermon to the Christian Clergy,"—after which one might turn to H.P.B.'s "The Tidal Wave," in order to recognize that the "wave" of which she speaks is again gathering strength.

In all, the present is a heartening time for those who labor in behalf of the Theosophical Movement. Much has been accomplished since 1875. A new plateau of thought already exists, ready, one might say, for a fresh presentation of Theosophy, this time not so much "in conflict" with prevailing conceptions as explanatory of and encouraging to the directions of the best thinking of the age. Already there are signs of the further awakening of Manas, and of intuitions concerning true issues.

RECENT PROGRESS IN THEOSOPHY

WHATEVER else may be thought of theosophy and its movement, time has at least proved that it is not the ephemeron which the American and foreign press called it upon its first appearance. It seems to have come to occupy a permanent place in modern thought, thus vindicating the truth of Sir John Herschel's observation that "the grand, and, indeed, the only, character of truth is its capability of enduring the test of universal experience, and coming unchanged out of every possible form of fair discussion."

Unfortunately, theosophy has never yet had a "fair" chance; but that must come. It has been represented in a most grotesque light, travestied out of all resemblance. With few exceptions, even its friends have shown in their published writings an imperfect grasp of the subject. If theosophy had been discussed upon its merits, apart from the personalities with which the movement has been associated, we cannot doubt that it would have had by this time a much wider vogue than it has. All the signs point that way. The most strenuous efforts of bigots, theological and scientific, and the employment of ridicule, sarcasm, misrepresentations, and denunciations by its opponents, have failed to check the growth of the Theosophical Society or its influence, or even to impede the expansion of the theosophical idea throughout the world. Scarcely the most optimistic among the society's organizers dreamt of such success as has rewarded their labors. The little coterie of thoughtful men and women who met in an Irving Place parlor one summer evening in the year 1875 builded better than they (with their undeveloped foresight) knew, when they resolved to organize such an association.

We are often asked, "What is the general object of the Theosophical Society? *Cui bono* all this outlay of labor, all that energy expended from its beginning to swim against the strong tide of public prejudice, sectarian hatred, and unpopularity? Of the three well-known objects of the society[1] not one but had, and has its teachers and followers in the past as in the present. Your first object, namely, brotherhood of man, lies at the very basis of Christianity; your second is promoted by the

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NOTE.—This article by Madame Blavatsky originally appeared in a non-theosophical periodical, *The North American Review,* August, 1890, and was reprinted in two parts in THEOSOPHY for September and October, 1946. The entire article appears in this issue.

[1] 1. Brotherhood of man; 2. Study of Oriental philosophies; 3. Investigation of the hidden forces in nature and man. *Vide infra.*

Asiatic societies, the national museums, and all the Orientalists; your third may be allowed to remain in the hands of the men of science, who have already dissected spiritualism and exploded mesmerism, and now, under the lead of the Society of Psychical Research, are disposing of the question of thought-transference, the phantasm of the living, and the Theosophical Society."

We note the exception that the *cuckoo* S.P.R. hatched its first eggs in the nests of theosophy and spiritualism,[2] it evidently has the same relation to the scientific body as to its two foster-mothers, and can enjoy a superior intimacy only as a reward for its treachery to the latter and its sycophancy to materialistic science. In rejoinder to the first two assertions, the Theosophists would ask Christians and Orientalists what they were doing in their respective departments to realize practically our first two objects? Under correction, I must say that it has been all talk and theory. Has the Sermon on the Mount, all its moral beauty notwithstanding, caused so-called Christian nations to treat each other in the ideal Christian spirit, or to offer brotherhood to Asiatic and African nations and tribes, whom they have subdued by force of arms or wiles? And has the philosophical acumen of Professor Max Müller, who has been showing us for thirty years past that the same Aryan blood runs in the brown body of the Indian sepoy as under the blanched skin of the English lord and British grocer, prevented the dominant Anglo-Indian from giving the Queen-Empress's Asiatic subjects cumulative proofs of his supreme disdain?

The Theosophical Society has been called the Royal Asiatic Society *plus* philanthropy; and as the latter body lacks the instinct of brotherliness, and too often shows a disposition to sacrifice truth for theological predilection, its nearly a century of work has shed darkness instead of light upon the Aryan philosophies, religions, and sciences. As to the third object, it must be said of the work of the S.P.R., and the superior labor of the French hypnotists of Paris and Nancy, that these agencies, while accumulating a mass of important facts for future philosophers, have, with a very few honorable exceptions, tried their best to give a false interpretation to those phenomena that they could not dispose of

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[2] The real originator and founder of the S. P. R. was "M. A. Oxon" (Mr. W. Stainton Moses), now the editor of *Light*. It was he who, being then a member of the T. S., first proposed the formation of a society on the lines of the long-defunct *Dialectical Society* of London, for the investigation of abnormal phenomena. This gentleman must have regretted more than once his idea. The S. P. R., the progeny of spiritualism and theosophy, has proved itself a would-be parricide, though rather an unsuccessful one so far.

on the theory of fraud. Their obligations have all been offered on the altar of the Moloch of materialism.

Since it is undeniable that this materialistic bias has been rapidly culminating under university influence during the past half-century, it is too evident that the creation of the Theosophical Society at the time when it arose was most timely, and a step toward the defense of *true* science and *true* religion against a sciolism that was becoming more and more arrogant. The experiments of Charcot at the *Salpétrière* have been so unsatisfactorily explained by the professors of his materialistic school that the appearance of the ancient esoteric philosophy in the arena of Western thought was a vital necessity. The conviction has already dawned upon the minds of some of the cleverest Western experimentalists that the "impassable chasm" and the "unknowable" of Messrs. Tyndall and Spencer can never be bridged or known by anything short of the Aryan esoteric doctrine. The cultured interest and popular curiosity that are shown in every country when a Theosophist or theosophy comes to the fore, and the universal popularity of theosophical and mystical literature, which has enriched many publishers and writers, are indications of the despair and hope of Christendom—despair that science will ever read this puzzle of life; hope that the solution may be found in the secret doctrine.

The theosophical movement was a necessity of the age, and it has spread under its own inherent impulsion, and owes nothing to adventitious methods. From the first it has had neither money, endowment, nor social or governmental patronage to count upon. It appealed to certain human instincts and aspirations, and held a certain lofty ideal of perfectibility, with which the vested extraneous interests of society conflicted, and against which these were fore-doomed to battle. Its strongest allies were the human yearnings for light upon the problem of life, and for a nobler conception of the origin, destiny, and potentialities of the human being. While materialism and its congener, secularism, were bent upon destroying not only theology and sectarian dogmatism, but even the religious conception of a diviner Self, theosophy has aimed at uniting all broad religious people for research into the actual basis of religion and scientific proofs of the existence and permanence of the higher Self. Accepting thankfully the results of scientific study and exposure of theological error, and adopting the methods and maxims of science, its advocates try to save from the wreck of cults the precious admixture of truth to be found in each. Discarding the theory of miracle

and supernaturalism, they endeavor to trace out the kinship of the whole family of world-faiths to each other, and their common reconciliation with science.

The growing inclination of the public mind toward theosophy seems to mark a reaction from the iconoclastic influence of Colonel Ingersoll's and Mr. Bradlaugh's school. Undoubtedly there are thousands of so-called Free-thinkers who sincerely believe in personal annihilation at the death of the body; but it would seem from the fact of the recent conversion of Mrs. Annie Besant from secularism to theosophy, and the discussions to which it has given rise, that there are also many persons enrolled as followers of the two great leaders above mentioned who are so from ignorance of the views included in the term theosophy. We officers and fellows of the Theosophical Society are, therefore, encouraged to hope that, with the wider dissemination of the facts, we shall see very large accessions to our cause from the secularist ranks. Surely this must be considered a gain by the friends of spirituality as opposed to materialism,—those, at any rate, who think that morals, peace, and prosperity will be promoted by the universal belief in a life after death (whether eternal or broken up by a series of reincarnations on the same earth), and in man's possession of a higher, undying SELF, latent spiritual powers, and consciousness.

It is the worse for the public, particularly for the religious feelings of the public, that the organs of sectarian bigotry should have succeeded so well by perversion of fact, frenzied calumny, and downright falsehood, in making our cause and the society appear in such a false light during the past fourteen years. Nor are the clerical organs alone in this undignified and useless work; for the weeklies of the Spiritualists in the United States are just as bitter and as untruthful in their ceaseless denunciation of theosophy. The virulence and vituperations of the intellectual apostles of the "spirit-guides" and "controls" from the "Summer-land" have grown proportionately to the growth of the Theosophical Society. The effects of the last convention held by the American Theosophists at Chicago, on April 29 and 30 of the present year [1890],[3] furnish a brilliant example of this blind and ferocious hatred. Such was the decided and unprecedented success of the last gathering that even the leading papers of Chicago and other cities had to admit the fact,

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[3] There are at the present day *thirty-eight* chartered branches of the Theosophical Society in the United States, and the activity on the Pacific Coast in this direction is very remarkable.

finding almost for the first time naught but words of sympathy for the Theosophists.

Alone the organs of disembodied "angels" poured as unsuccessfully as ever their vials of wrath, mockery, and brutal slander upon us. But we heed them not. Why should we? The utmost malignity and basest treachery have not been able either to controvert our ideas, belittle our objects, disprove the reasonableness of our methods, or fasten upon us a selfish or dishonest motive. And as our declared principles are not merely unobjectionable, but admirably calculated to do good to mankind, these conspirators and calumniators have simply kept a multitude of religiously-inclined persons from enjoying the happiness they would have had by understanding theosophy as it really is, and making it the guiding rule of their conduct.

If justice be the law of nature, and injustice a transitory evil, direful must indeed be the retribution these misguided people have invoked upon their own heads. The suffering we have been made to endure has but served as discipline, and taught us to turn the more loyally toward the esoteric doctrine for comfort and encouragement.

My present theme being the current progress of our movement, the situation may best be illustrated by reference to statistics. To avoid prolixity we may begin with the year 1884, when the raid upon us was made by the London Society for Psychical Research. From the official report of that year it appears that on the 31st of December, 1884, there were in existence, in all parts of the world, 104 chartered branches of the Theosophical Society. In the year 1885, as an answer to our calumniators, seventeen new charters were issued; in 1886, fifteen; in 1887, twenty-two; in 1888, twenty-one; and up to the 1st of September, 1889, seventeen. To the 31st of December, 1888, six charters had been rescinded, leaving 173 still valid; and if the new ones of 1889 be added, there would be a gross total of 190 chartered branches, from which have to be deducted any cancellations reported during the last twelve-month. But we have heard of none. On the contrary, up to June, 1890, we find on our books upward of 200 branches.

In England, a country where theosophy has to work up-hill more than in any other place, three years ago there was but one solitary branch—the "London Lodge" of the Theosophical Society, with about 150 members in it. Since the arrival of the present writer in England, and the establishment of the "Blavatsky Lodge," in June, 1887 (which has now upward of 300 members and associates), twelve branches of the Theo-

sophical Society have been established in various centers of Great Britain, and the number of members is daily increasing. The growth of our society in this conservative country has been more marvellous in comparison than even in the United States of America. The growth since the raid of 1884 has, therefore, been at the rate of about nineteen new charters per annum, and the final computation of 1889 will show as great an increment. Dividing 104—the sum total up to the close of 1884—by 10, the number of years since the society's foundation, we get an average annual growth of 10.4 branches; whence it appears that, so far from being crushed out of existence, as the organizers of the raid had fondly hoped might be the result, the Theosophical Society has very largely increased its average rate of expansion, geographically and numerically.

It is useless to remind the American reader of the unrelenting, systematic persecution to which the writer of these lines—and through her, theosophy—is, and has been for years, subjected in the American press, by enemies as persevering as they are base. And if no conspiracy, no attack, could ever seriously shake the society or impede its movement, nothing ever will. We can only thankfully repeat, slightly paraphrasing it, the Christian adage now so applicable to our movement, "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of theosophy." Its society has done too much good work, the good grain is much too evident even in the piles of admitted chaff, not to have built a secure foundation for the temple of truth in the immediate, as in the distant, future.

For, see, the literature of theosophy is growing rapidly. We have seven principle centres of publication—Madras, Bombay, Ceylon (Colombo), Stockholm, London, Paris, and New York. The Stockholm branch, founded hardly a year ago, has far over one hundred members, and our literature in Sweden is spreading rapidly. Little Ceylon had twenty-one branches three months ago, and may have more now. Madras is the general headquarters of the society, the official residence of the president and executive staff, and the office of *The Theosophist* is there. At Bombay we have a "Theosophical Publication Fund," created and managed by Mr. Tookeram Tatya, a Hindoo Theosophist, which brings out important works in Sanskrit and English; an enterprise spoken of with great praise by Professor Max Müller in a letter published both in *The Theosophist* and *Lucifer.* In London there is a "Theosophical Publishing Society," which brings out the magazine *Lucifer* (edited by Mrs. Annie Besant and myself) and a series of pam-

phlets called the "T. P. S.," issued fortnightly, and many new theosophical works.

Following the good example set to us by the Aryan Theosophical Society of New York—the headquarters of the theosophical movement in America—a committee was formed in London last May for the wide distribution through the post of leaflets on theosophical doctrines, each member taking charge of a definite district. During the first months of the establishment of the "tract-mailing scheme" at New York, the Aryan Theosophical Society has distributed over 150,000 papers on theosophy and its doctrines. In Paris another monthly was started a year ago, the *Revue Théosophique,* edited by myself, and managed by the Countess d'Adhémar; and now another theosophical magazine has appeared—*Le Lotus Bleu*—since March, also edited by myself, and managed by Arthur Arnould, a well-known journalist in Paris, and the president of the Theosophical Society of Paris, "l'Hermes." In New York we have *The Path,* whose editor, Mr. W. Q. Judge, publishes also a number of books and pamphlets. The existence of these centres shows undeniably that our movement is constantly on the increase, and that all interested and malicious reports to the contrary are without foundation.

But it is our Adyar Library, founded by the loving labor of our president, Colonel H. S. Olcott, which is the crown and glory of the Theosophical Society. Though only three years old, it has already acquired a large collection of Oriental works of the greatest value—3,046 volumes—besides over 2,000 works in European languages, and a number of rare palm-leaf manuscripts. In the words of our learned librarian, Pundit N. Bhashyacharya:

"In the department of Buddhistic literature it is richer than any library in India, and probably equal to most in Western countries.[4] Prominent among these works are: (1) The generous present of Mrs. Dias Ilangakoon, a Buddhist lady Theosophist, of Matara, Ceylon, a 'complete set of the Pali version of the *Tripitakas* engraved on palm leaves, and comprising sixty volumes, with nearly 5,000 pages. Twelve stylus-writers were employed during two years in copying the volumes from the unique collection at Merissa',—a collection that cost the donor rupees 3,500. (2) The Jodo sect of Japanese Buddhists presented Colonel Olcott 'with a complete set of the Chinese versions of the *Tripitakas* in 418

[4] For particulars *vide* the learned and interesting article of Pundit N. Bhashyacharya, director of the Oriental Section of the Adyar Library, in *The Theosophist,* August, 1889.

volumes, on silk paper.' . . . Other 'Japanese sects presenting him with 1,057 volumes' in all. (3) Twenty-two scroll paintings on silk and paper, . . . among which are two on silk that are said to be over 800 years old, and a MS. 350 years old, written in fine gold ink upon a scroll of some very smooth black paper, 33 feet in length, and mounted on a roller."

"There is also," writes the learned Brahmin librarian, "a large picture upon which, painted in vivid colors, . . . are 137 scenes in the life of the founder of the Jodo sect; . . . and an ancient biography of the Adept-Founder of the Yamabusi, or fraternity of phenomena-workers, and a scroll portrait of himself attended by some fire-elementals whom he seems to have subjugated to his trained will. Doctor Bigelow (late of Boston), now of Tokio, kindly gave a photograph of a bronze group representing Kobo-daishi, the Adept-Founder of Shin-gon sect, attended by two little elementals, who are serving him as messengers and domestics." All of which shows that the theosophical scapegoat, H. B. Blavatsky, has *invented* neither Adept fraternities nor "elementals," their existence having been known in Japan, China, and India for long centuries.

Such are a few of the unique treasures in books and antiquities of the Adyar Library of the T. S., "got together under the greatest difficulties of total lack of pecuniary endowment and public patronage," and which "has received from no government as yet so much as a single book or one rupee." And that noble library will survive the founders and all present members of the Theosophical Society, and go on speaking of the work done when many other things are forgotten.

Having cast a hasty glance at the general aspect of the society as it stands at the present moment, I may be permitted to state very briefly the three broad principles upon which it is building up, and then recapitulate the results actually achieved under each heading.

The three officially-declared objects of our society are:

1. To form the nucleus of a universal brotherhood of humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or color.

2. To promote the study of Aryan and other Eastern literatures, religions, philosophies, and sciences.

3. A third object, pursued by a portion of the fellows of the society, is to investigate unexplained laws of nature and the psychic powers of man.

Two general objects, one restricted object, of attention. Every one

entering the society is supposed to sympathize with the theory of essential brotherhood: a kinship which exists on the plane of the higher self, not on that of the racial, social, and mental dissimilarities and antipathies. These elements of discord pertain to the physical man and are the result of unequal development under the law of evolution. We believe the human body to be but the shell, cover, or veil of the real entity; and those who accept the esoteric philosophy and the theory of "Karma" (the universal law of ethical causation) believe that the entity, as it travels around certain major and minor cycles of existence with the whole mass of human beings, takes on a different body at birth, and shells it off at death, under the operation of this Karmic law. Yet though it may thus clothe and reclothe itself a thousand times in a series of reincarnations, the entity is unchanged and unchangeable, being of a divine nature, superior to all environments on the earthly plane. It is the physical body only which has racial type, color, sex, hatreds, ambitions, and loves. So then, when we postulate the idea of universal brotherhood, we wish it understood that it is held in no Utopian sense, though we do not dream of realizing it at once on the ordinary plane of social or national relations. Most assuredly, if this view of the kinship of all mankind could gain universal acceptance, the improved sense of moral responsibility it would engender would cause most social evils and international asperities to disappear; for a true altruism, instead of the present egoism, would be the rule the world over. So we have written down as the first of our declared objects this altruistic asseveration, and have been working practically to bring about a beginning of the better law.

The second of our declared objects speaks so plainly for itself that I need not dwell upon it, save in the most casual way. The founders of the Theosophical Society thought they had the best reason to believe that there existed, locked up in the ancient literatures of India, Ceylon, Tibet, China, Japan, and other Eastern countries, a very large body of truth which would be most important and valuable to the present generation, if it could be got at. The best agents to employ in this work were the Oriental scholars who knew the ancient languages, especially those—if any could be found—who had learned the concealed meaning of the names, figures, and expressions with which Asiatic writings teem, and which are the despair of our Western Orientalists. These savants are priests of various religions and pandits, or professors, in a number of philosophical Eastern schools of thought. They had never before worked together in the interest of the whole family of man-

kind, so antagonistic are their personal views and so mutually contradictory their several religions and philosophical books. No scheme of cooperation between them could be carried out save upon the lines defined in our first declared object—that is to say, upon the theory of the universal relationship of all mankind on the plane of the higher self, and the policy of not meddling with what concerns only the mutual relations of the lower self, the physical man. It shall be shown presently how this part of our scheme has worked.

Observe the third declaration, that only a portion of our fellows occupy themselves with the study of the occult properties of matter and the physical powers of man. The society as a whole, then, is not concerned in this branch of research. And naturally; for out of every ten thousand people one may meet, the chances are that but a very small minority have the time, taste, or ability to take up such delicate and baffling studies. Those who do are born mystics, and, of course, natural Theosophists; a Theosophist being one who seeks after divine wisdom —*i.e.,* the comprehension of the ultimate causes of force, correlation, and psychic development, the method of solving all life's riddles. Persons of this temperament cannot be bigots; they chafe under the sectarian yoke, and their hearts warm with sympathy for all who suffer, who groan under social burdens resulting from ignorance, for all of any race, creed, or color, who aspire after knowledge. These men are true Theosophists, the brothers of humanity, and, in their complete development, the spiritual exemplars, guides, teachers, benefactors, of our race. We thought it a good thing to proclaim this line of research and self-discovery as the third of our three objects. For those who are interested in it, and all inquirers whom they can reach and encourage, have the mystical philosophical books of the present and former times been written. To the general public these books are caviare.

Taking the three divisions of our objects in order, let us see what has actually been accomplished during the fourteen years of the Theosophical Society's existence. The compilation shall be made from official documents and be capable of verification at any time. First, as regards object number one, let it be noticed that we have done things on the broadest possible scale, dealing with nations in the mass as well as with individuals or small groups. Colonel Olcott and I removed from New York to Bombay at the beginning of the year 1878, at which time we had just established relations between Western students of Oriental mysticism, and a few educated Hindus and Sinhalese. In the East we

found division between sects, castes, and races; the ancient religions neglected, and by the educated classes unappreciated; the pride of race, reverence for ancestors, and patriotic spirit almost extinguished. Now the traveller will be struck with the brotherliness which has begun to prevail; the resuscitation of interest in ancestral character, achievements, and literature; and a fervor of patriotism which has culminated in the formation of the Indian National Congress—a political body with which our society has no connection, though it was organized by our fellows, Indian and Anglo-Indian.

Soon after our arrival at Bombay our society began to grow, branches rapidly sprang up, and it became necessary to hold annual conventions of delegates representing the now widely-expanded society. Responsive to the president's call, thirty-odd branches sent as their representatives Hindu, Parsi, Buddhist, Mohammedan, Hebrew, and Christian fellows to the first convention at Bombay. The spectacle was unique in Indian history, and provoked wide journalistic comment. At the public meeting in Framji Cavasji Institute the platform was successively occupied by speakers of the above-named religions, who vied with each other in fervent declarations of mutual tolerance and good-will, to the accompaniment of tumultuous applause from the audience. Thus the clear note of universal brotherhood was struck and the evangel of religious tolerance declared in a part of the world where previously there had been only sectarian hatred and selfish class egotism.

This was in 1882. Annually since then the convention has met as a parliamentary body to transact the society's business, and not the least sectarian or race discord has occurred. The whole of India became leavened with the benign influence emanating from these meetings, through the agency of the delegates in their respective states and nations; and when the political agitation began, the National Congress that was called was modelled upon our lines, and officered and managed mainly by our own fellows who had served as delegates in our conventions.

Besides helping to weave this golden web of brotherhood throughout India, our society has extended its filaments from that centre to Ceylon, Burmah, Siam, and Japan, bringing these peoples—though of a different religion—into fraternal relations with the Hindus, and creating channels for international intercourse upon religious and educational subjects. In those countries also, we have sown the same seed of good-will, and in Ceylon we are already reaping the harvest. In that evergreen, paradisaical isle of the sea we have revived and begun to purify

Buddhism, established high-schools, taken some fifty minor schools under our supervision, circulated literature in all parts of the island, induced the government to proclaim Buddha's birthday a public holiday, founded two journals, created a printing-office, and brought the Sinhalese Buddhists into direct relations with their Japanese co-religionists.

This is what we have done in India and the far East. As to Europe, as we began to work in earnest here only three years ago, the effects hardly begin to be perceived as yet. Still in London, in the very centre of the most luxurious materialism, we have founded in the East End the first Working-Woman's Club, wholly free from theological creeds and conditions. Hitherto all such efforts have been sectarian, and have imposed special religious beliefs: ours is based on *brotherhood* alone, and recognizes no difference in creed as a barrier. When the club opens, a few weeks hence, the members will find themselves in a bright and pleasant home, with books, papers, and music at hand, and a band of their better-educated sisters will take in rotation, night after night, the duty of helping and guiding—not controlling—the evening recreation.

Only those who know the dreary lives of our poor East-End girls, with temptation lurking in every form of amusement within their reach, will understand the brotherly nature of the service thus rendered to them. We (the cultured classes) make outcasts of these less fortunate members of our family, set them in a special part of the town, amid squalid surroundings and coarsening influences; and we then complain that their roughness shocks our refinement, their brutality jars on our delicacy! Here, then, against class division, as in India against caste division, the Theosophical Society proclaims the Brotherhood of Man.

As regards the revival of Oriental literature, the whole press of India, Ceylon, and Japan unqualifiedly give us the credit of having done more in that direction than any other agency of modern times. We have not only helped to revive in India the ancient *Tols,* or pandit-schools of Sanskrit literature and philosophy, and to reawaken reverence for the class of real Yogis, or saintly devotees, but we have created a demand for reprints and translations of ancient Sanskrit classics, which is being met by the frequent issue of works of this class at Calcutta, Bombay, Benares, Lucknow, Lahore, Madras, and other Indian literary centres.

Among the most important are the Vedas, Bhagavad Gita, the writings of Sankara, Patanjali, and other renowned Aryan philosophers and mystics. The Asiatic people have publicly testified most unqualifiedly

their gratitude and respect to us for what we have done on the lines of the second of our declared objects. Nor should it be overlooked that the prevalent interest in theosophy and mystical Oriental philosophy in general, which the most casual observer is forced to see throughout Europe and America, is directly or indirectly the result of our society's activity. With thirty-eight branches in the United States, and others in various European countries, among whose members are men and women of high culture, including many writers for the press, it is easy enough to comprehend the justness of the above claim. Of course it is not for me to say how much, if anything, the books I have myself written, and the magazines I have edited and am editing in English and French, have helped to cause this new bent of the Western mind. Suffice it that it exists. For Theosophists it is the presage of the dawn of a new religious day for the world, the harbinger of a new marriage between science and religion, and of peace between the good people of the most incongruous sects—as the world thinks them.

Now as to the third object on our list. Properly speaking, the term "psychical research" should include the whole of the great movement known as modern spiritualism. But the subject is too vast to be dealt with in the closing paragraphs of an article. Suffice it to say that many investigators have been led to discriminate much more closely between the various classes of phenomena, while much has been done to weaken the sentimental, but unphilosophical, superstition which made the "Spirits" of the departed the suffering spectators of the follies and crimes of the living. For details as to the conclusions we have arrived at on this subject, the reader must be referred to "The Key to Theosophy," wherein the question is dealt with at length.

At least we may claim to have placed before the thinking public a logical, coherent, and philosophical scheme of man's origin, destiny, and evolution—a scheme pre-eminent above all for its rigorous adherence to justice. And, that we may broaden our criterion of truth, our research extends to an inquiry into the nature of the less known forces, cosmic and psychical. Upon such themes many of our books have been written, and many of our reprints of ancient works, with or without commentaries, have been selected with reference to the light they throw upon these *quaestiones vexatae*.

In one word, our whole aim and desire are to help, in at least some degree, toward arriving at correct scientific views upon the nature of man, which carry with them the means of reconstructing for the pres-

ent generation the deductive metaphysical or transcendental philosophy which alone is the firm, unshakable foundation of every religious philosophy. Theosophy, the universal solvent, is fulfilling its mission; the opalescent tints of the dawn of modern psychology are blending together, and will all be merged into the perfect daylight of truth, when the sun-orb of Eastern esotericism has mounted to its noon-stage.

For many a long year the "great orphan," Humanity, has been crying aloud in the darkness for guidance and for light. Amid the increasing splendors of a progress purely material, of a science that nourished the intellect, but left the spirit to starve, Humanity, dimly feeling its origin and presaging its destiny, has stretched out towards the East empty hands that only a *spiritual* philosophy can fill. Aching from the divisions, the jealousies, the hatreds, that rend its very life, it has cried for some sure foundation on which to build the solidarity it senses, some metaphysical basis from which its loftiest social ideals may rise secure. Only the Masters of the Eastern wisdom can set that foundation, can satisfy at once the intellect and the spirit, can guide Humanity safely through the night to "the dawn of a larger day."

Such is the goal which theosophy has set itself to attain; such is the history of the modern movement; such is the work which theosophy has already accomplished in this nineteenth century.

The Infallible Index

The infallible index of true progress is found in the tone the man takes. Neither his age, nor his breeding, nor company, nor books, nor actions, nor talents, nor all together, can hinder him from being deferential to a higher spirit than his own. If he have not found his home in God, his manners, his forms of speech, the turn of his sentences, the build, shall I say, of all his opinions, will involuntarily confess it, let him brave it out how he will. If he have found his centre, the Deity will shine through him, through all the disguises of ignorance, of ungenial temperament, of unfavorable circumstance. The tone of seeking is one, and the tone of having is another.

—Emerson

NOTES ON PLATO'S SOCRATES

IN discussing the degree to which an exceptional individual may transcend the evolutionary status of average humanity, Madame Blavatsky cites Buddha as the leading example of a man who literally existed in another "Round" of evolution—the sixth, corresponding to the fulfillment of human intuitional potential. So far as Western civilization is concerned, and beginning with the Greeks of pre-Periclean Athens, H.P.B. cites Plato as a forerunner of the Fifth Round. Which means that, just as Buddha represented the epitome of intuitive perception, so Plato represents the apotheosis of reason, the refinement of *manas* to the point represented by the man who is "constitutionally" incapable of deviating from the rule of reason in any department of his life. In *Isis Unveiled,* summarizing her superlatives in respect to Plato, Madame Blavatsky remarks that "Plato denominates the perfect contemplation of things" . . .

> He also considers the binding of the head and crowning as analogous to the authority which any one receives from his instructors, of leading others into the same contemplation. The fifth gradation is the most perfect felicity arising from hence, and according to Plato, an assimilation to divinity as far as is possible to human beings.
>
> Such is Platonism. "Out of Plato," says Ralph Waldo Emerson, "come all things that are still written and debated among men of thought." He absorbed the learning of his times—of Greece from Philolaus to Socrates; then of Pythagoras in Italy; then what he could procure from Egypt and the East. He was so broad that all philosophy, European and Asiatic, was in his doctrines; and to culture and contemplation he added the nature and qualities of the poet.

It is worth more than passing note to recall that Plato, in all of his philosophical dialogues, chose Socrates as his spokesman. Socrates was a mystic—H.P.B. calls him a "pure medium"—and a rare man whose nobility was concealed beneath an "ugly" exterior. Socrates wandered Athens in shabby raiment, and barefoot, most of the time, as the slaves whose status Plato deplored. Recognition of his greatness depended either upon the inner sight or upon a sensitive appreciation for the nuances of meaning in his dialogues with the townsfolk and the officials. Plato's Socrates says many things which Socrates himself may never have said or even imagined, but, by choosing this spokesman, Plato identified his entire philosophy with the Rule of Reason. And thus

he stands, for all thoughtful men who have lived since, as the founder of a new culture and tradition—one which will come to full fruition only at a later period of human evolution, but which may be lived by isolated individuals and devoted brotherhoods in the meantime, these also constituting progenitors and prototypes.

The Theosophical student will note that Plato's selection of Socrates as his mouthpiece correlates with an affirmation, by both of them, of the doctrine of reincarnation. Unremarked by Zenophon and other contemporary Greeks who have supplied posterity with what biographical information is available, Socrates affirmed the truth of rebirth. In Roger's *History of Philosophy* we discover that Socrates' faith in the doctrine of immortality through rebirth was a matter of deep conviction, and not simply the projection of a speculative theory; Dr. Rogers amended the first version of his *History of Philosophy* with a statement to this effect. Plato, also, is seldom known to scholars as a "believer" in palingenesis, yet for the theosophical Platonist the evidence is clear and conclusive. Before examining Plato's description of "the rule of reason," therefore, let us make specific reference to Plato's own obvious belief, so that we may be assured that his failure to preach and instruct directly on this topic was due to no lack of conviction, but rather to a perception that his message must be pre-eminently *non*-doctrinal.

Many professors of philosophy, supposedly familiar with Plato, seem to be unaware that he was a thorough-going believer in reincarnation. The passages containing Plato's affirmation of reincarnation doctrine are, it is true, widely scattered and often obscure, but there is no doubt as to their existence, and it may be valuable for the Theosophical student to have some of the basic statements brought together in quotation. In the *Phaedo,* Plato has Socrates discuss the prospect of rebirth in a peculiar fashion—one which leaves the listener very much up in the air. For what Socrates first grants, he then casts doubt upon, so that we are able to be sure of only one thing—that Plato does not wish his readers to confuse doctrine with knowledge:

> I am not disposed to deny that the soul is stronger and more lasting than the body, being of opinion that in all such respects the soul very far excels the body.
>
> Any one may very fairly say that the soul is lasting, and the body weak and shortlived in comparison. He may argue in like manner that every soul wears out many bodies, especially if a man live many years. While he is alive the body deliquesces and decays, and the soul always weaves another garment and repairs the waste. But of

course, whenever the soul perishes, she must have on her last garment, and this will survive her; and then at length, when the soul is dead, the body will show its native weakness, and quickly decompose and pass away. I would therefore rather not rely on the argument from superior strength to prove the continued existence of the soul after death. For granting even more than you affirm to be possible, and acknowledging not only that the soul existed before birth, but also that the souls of some exist, and will continue to exist after death, and will be born and die again and again, and that there is a natural strength in the soul which will hold out and be born many times—nevertheless, we may be still inclined to think that she will weary in the labours of successive births, and may at last succumb in one of her deaths and utterly perish.

All of us, as we afterwards remarked to one another, had an unpleasant feeling at hearing what they said. When we had been so firmly convinced before, now to have our faith shaken seemed to introduce a confusion and uncertainty, not only into the previous argument, but into any future one; either we were incapable of forming a judgment, or there were no grounds of belief.

Elsewhere in the *Phaedo,* Socrates goes to some pains to indicate that the common Greek acceptance of pre-existence of the soul demands logical extension to the affirmation of future lives. When Socrates asks Simmias if he is not convinced of pre-existence, Simmias replies that while both he and Cebes are inclined to agree on this, Cebes still feels vague doubts about the continuance of the soul in the future. Here Socrates is not speaking from the standpoint of doctrine, but from the standpoint of logic; and therefore he can be, and is, unequivocal:

Our souls must have had a prior existence.

Yes, Socrates; I am convinced that there is precisely the same necessity for the one as for the other; and the argument retreats successfully to the position that the existence of the soul before birth cannot be separated from the existence of the essence of which you speak. For there is nothing which to my mind is so patent as that beauty, goodness, and the other notions of which you were just now speaking, have a most real and absolute existence; and I am satisfied with the proof.

Well, but is Cebes equally satisfied? for I must convince him too.

I think, said Simmias, that Cebes is satisfied; although he is the most incredulous of mortals, yet I believe that he is sufficiently convinced of the existence of the soul before birth. But that after death the soul will continue to exist is not yet proven even to my own satisfaction. I cannot get rid of the feeling of the many to which Cebes was referring—the feeling that when the man dies the soul will be

dispersed, and that this may be the extinction of her. For admitting that she may have been born elsewhere, and framed out of other elements, and was in existence before entering the human body, why after having entered in and gone out again may she not herself be destroyed and come to an end?

Very true, Simmias, said Cebes; about half of what was required has been proven; to wit, that our souls existed before we were born: —that the soul will exist after death as well as before birth is the other half of which the proof is still wanting, and has to be supplied; when that is given the demonstration will be complete.

But that proof, Simmias and Cebes, has been already given, said Socrates, if you put the two arguments together—I mean this and the former one, in which we admitted that everything living is born of the dead. For if the soul exists before birth, and in coming to life and being born can be born only from death and dying, must she not after death continue to exist, since she has to be born again.

Yet, after this discourse, and after describing the passage of the soul through the nether world, and back to birth again, Plato has Socrates remark that he does not mean to impart a definite doctrine, but only to suggest that "something of the kind be true." In other words, he insists upon devotion to reason, which means the constant drawing of distinction between theory or belief, and knowledge. This also helps us to understand why Plato's lengthiest discussion of reincarnation occurs at the close of *The Republic* in a symbolical account—the "Myth of Er." In this account, Socrates speaks of the condition of souls who have left the body:

A man must take with him into the world below an adamantine faith in truth and right, that there too he may be undazzled by the desire of wealth or the other allurements of evil, lest, coming upon tyrannies and similar villainies, he do irremediable wrongs to others and suffer yet worse himself; but let him know how to choose the mean and avoid the extremes on either side, as far as possible, not only in this life but in all that which is to come. For this is the way of happiness.

If a man had always on his arrival in this world dedicated himself from the first to sound philosophy, and had been moderately fortunate in the number of the lot, he might, as the messenger reported, be happy here, and also his journey to another life and return to this, instead of being rough and underground, would be smooth and heavenly. Most curious, he said, was the spectacle—sad and laughable and strange; for the choice of the souls was in most cases based on their experience of a previous life.

There came also the soul of Odysseus having yet to make a choice, and his lot happened to be the last of them all. Now the recollection

of former toils had disenchanted him of ambition, and he went about for a considerable time in search of the life of a private man who had no cares; he had some difficulty in finding this, which was lying about and had been neglected by everybody else; and when he saw it, he said that he would have done the same had his lot been first instead of last, and that he was delighted to have it.

All the souls had now chosen their lives, and they went in the order of their choice to Lachesis, who sent with them the genius whom they had severally chosen, to be the guardian of their lives and the fulfiller of the choice: this genius led the souls first to Clotho, and drew them within the revolution of the spindle impelled by her hand, thus ratifying the destiny of each; and then, when they were fastened to this, carried them to Atropos, who spun the threads and made them irreversible, whence without turning round they passed beneath the throne of Necessity; and when they had all passed, they marched on in a scorching heat to the plain of Forgetfulness, which was a barren waste destitute of trees and verdure; and then towards evening they encamped by the river of Unmindfulness, whose water no vessel can hold; of this they were all obliged to drink a certain quantity, and those who were not saved by wisdom drank more than was necessary; and each one as he drank forgot all things. Now after they had gone to rest, about the middle of the night there was a thunderstorm and earthquake, and then in an instant they were driven upwards in all manner of ways to their birth, like stars shooting.

To Banish Fear

Having conquered nature, man faces the task of conquering himself. We tend to be frightened by our own handiwork. But this, surely does not mean that we should reject that handiwork, even if it were within our power to do so.... In this fast changing world the pattern of living has become highly intricate, with each man's destiny meshed more closely than in the past, with the destiny of his fellowmen. Everyone's survival depends literally upon the survival of his neighbors. An active interest in community problems, participation in civic life, once mere luxuries for the few, are today clear necessities for all. We cannot banish dangers, but we can banish fears. We must not demean life by standing in awe of death. I do not doubt that we shall win in the deepening struggle between liberty and enslavement; that we can emerge better and stronger from the contest. Indeed, we could lose only by default—and Youth must make certain that it does not default.

—David Sarnoff

YOUTH-COMPANIONS ASK— AND ANSWER

IN The Ocean of Theosophy *Mr. Judge, speaking of desire, mentions the desires of the flesh as being different from the principle of desire. It seems dangerous to try to categorize; yet how might one discern the difference?*

There do definitely seem to be differences between the various motivations falling under the term "desire." Everyone is familiar with what is commonly called the "desires of the flesh": desire to eat, sleep, etc. But it is wondered if perhaps another form of desire could not come fairly close to falling into this same category of fleshly desire—that is, the simple urges of a human being to do what is within his reach and capacity to do, the desire to do and see only that which is directly before him. Deliberately undertaken, this can be interpreted as a form of discipline and rightly so. Yet, done involuntarily, this might be closer to the principle of desire.

It would appear to this student that this form of desire involves first the wish to get from here to there—the envisioning of a change. And this, quite obviously, as has been pointed out many times before, is merely a principle and can be used for good or for ill. However, it would seem that it could be possible for a man, even the same man, who in a previous incarnation lived the simple-type desire life, to embody a strong desire-principle, which is always moving him to something new. He is not content to stay with established formulas. His imagination carries him beyond the immediate and into the world of the future. This sort of "pushing" may take action in various ways—some of which might very well appear to be just desires of the flesh or "selfish" desires.

Yet it might also be true that this sort of a person is struggling with the principle of that which initiates change, whereas the man of simple desires, which involve only those things immediately before him, is not troubled or involved in this type of problem. The man who is consumed with the desire principle, could possibly need quite badly the experience of just working with what is before him and seeking nothing else. Yet, conversely, the one who never feels this impulse swell within him for further expression, is also missing an important element in life.

It is quite apparent that when realizing all the different combinations of desires—expressions of this principle—one must not, cannot,

categorize and pigeon-hole various actions as meaning so and so. The most important thing to remember, perhaps, is that the more complicated man's nature appears to us, the better then we might be able to figure out our own peculiar twists and quirks. Man's nature, like all of nature, is a maze of subtleties and variations. Oversimplification of this fact is avoidance of the truth. Nature, when left alone by man, is in balance and does not need to stop and figure out how to accomplish this. Man, on the other hand, is a mere child when it comes to attaining this end. Man is full of too many potentialities and degrees of intensities to achieve this delicate balance of the various principles easily.

It is often quoted that nothing is ever accomplished without there first being desire: "Desire first arose in it." In the complicated and "inorganic" society in which man grows up today, it is most difficult for him to lay his nature and character out and examine it. His life is too "busy" with nothings, the whole context of his environment is built on that which does not put the individual and his relationships first, but rather mass society and its patterns of actions.

It might be said, therefore, that there is a sliding scale of "desire." But there are those actions which are termed desires which lean more toward what has been defined as fleshly desires, and there are those motivations and tendencies which come closer to the "moving from one point to another," the accomplishment of something based on the conceiving of a needed change.

One of the results of presenting a play at a Lodge is a subsequent quickening of interest in Lodge activities, as is evidenced by an increase in attendance at meetings by members of both audience and cast. Perhaps this is one of the reasons for giving it in the first place. Aren't both the play-givers and the people who are stimulated to more attendance subverting the aims of the self-induced search for truth?

(*a*) Different individuals perceive events in different ways. Their interests in similar areas of activity vary, creating, in part, the many modes of communication existing for intellectual and emotional expression. Obviously then, the expression of an idea will be more or less understood to the extent that the observer is receptive to the particular manner of presentation involved. For one person a study-class or discussion group may leave the good seeds for further thought and self-growth; for another, individual study of a book may be the most productive, and for still another the inspiration of an art-form provides the

impetus for further effort and study. The effect, then, of externally originated ideas is only productive to the extent that the conceptions are internalized by the recipient.

Any activity which involves the individual directly and gives him a feeling of being part of its success will provide an effective means of holding his interest and continued participation. Often, however, just such a self-involvement continues to attract the individual, not by the abstractions presented, but by the social gratifications obtained from an interaction with others. This, it seems, is the basic issue which must be resolved in determining the value of play-giving as a Lodge activity: *i.e.,* are its results a reinforcement of the essential purposes of ULT activity, or do they nullify them by creating an activity of interest largely for its own sake?

This, it seems, is one of those questions for which there is no specific answer. The self-induced search for truth has no "proper" means of pursuit. It is not so much what is done, but rather how it is done that will bring a person closer to understanding himself and the universe in which he plays a part.

(*b*) In order for one to adequately grasp the philosophy of Theosophy, he must maintain an attitude of unself-righteousness; the inducements to further search must be inducements of ideas and attitudes rather than those of reputation. One cannot manufacture infallibly right courses for obtaining such attitudes, nor can such attitudes be infallibly detected in another.

However, the soul does not work by itself; it works through the body and the psychic nature. The psychic nature, especially, can be a deathtrap; however, it has to be used correctly, not shunned. There is, without doubt, beauty in truth, philosophy, in the pursuit of ideas. But there is also truth and beauty in working through other forms, and these forms need not be left out for fear that they will lead some of us astray. That is like saying, "I will not laugh because some laugh too much, too easily." Laughter, art, beauty all have a place and are needed.

An art form, such as a play, quite often offers a rare experience for those presenting it as well as for the spectators. I, for one, as a participant, found that one play in particular offered something of a "religious" or magic quality. This experience to me is important, and can augment rather than substitute for philosophy and self-induced search. However, such an experience need not be repeated, perhaps, too frequently.

THE LAYA STATE

LAYA is the point of matter where every differentiation has ceased. The term is Sanskrit, from the root *Li,* "to dissolve, to disintegrate," a point of equilibrium (zero-point) in physics and chemistry. In Occultism *Laya* is the point where substance becomes homogeneous and is unable to act or differentiate. The chemist goes to the laya or zero-point of the plane of matter with which he deals, and then stops short. The physicist or the astronomer counts by billions of miles beyond the nebulae, and then they also stop short. The semi-initiated Occultist will represent this laya-point to himself as existing on some plane which, if not physical, is still conceivable to the human intellect. But the full Initiate *knows* that the ring "Pass-Not" is neither a locality nor can it be measured by distance, but that it exists in the absoluteness of infinity. In this "Infinity" of the full Initiate there is neither height, breadth nor thickness, but all is fathomless profundity, reaching down from the physical to the "para-para-metaphysical." In using the word "down" essential depth—"nowhere and everywhere"—is meant, not depth of physical matter.

Whatsoever quits the laya state, becomes active life. It is drawn into the vortex of MOTION (the alchemical solvent of Life); Spirit and Matter are the two states of the ONE, which is neither Spirit nor Matter, both being the absolute life, latent. The old Initiates knew of no "miraculous creation," but taught the evolution of atoms (on our physical plane), and their first differentiation from *laya* into the . . . primordial substance *beyond* the zero line: there where we place Mulaprakriti, the "*root*-Principle" of the world stuff and of all in the world. Wherever there is an atom of matter, a particle or a molecule, even in its most gaseous condition, there is life in it, however latent and unconscious.

Modern science is secure only in its own domain and region, within the physical boundaries of our solar system, beyond which everything, every particle of matter, is different from the matter it knows; which matter exists in states of which science can form no idea. *That* matter, which is truly homogeneous, is beyond human perceptions, if perception is tied down merely to the five senses. We feel its effects through those INTELLIGENCES which are the results of its primeval differentiations, whom we name Dhyan Chohans . . . the Building Powers. That

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NOTE:—Collated from *The Secret Doctrine.*

matter, the real primordial substance, the *noumenon* of all the matter we know of, even some of the astronomers have been led to believe in, and to despair of the possibility of ever accounting for rotation, gravitation, and the origin of any mechanical, physical laws—unless those *Intelligences* be admitted by Science. From the Unknown One, the infinite TOTALITY, the manifested ONE, or the periodical, manvantaric Deity, emanates; and this is the Universal Mind which, separated at its Fountain-Source . . . represents in its totality the Hosts of the higher creative Dhyan Chohans. Moreover, in occult metaphysics there are, properly speaking two "ONES"—the One on the unreachable plane of Absoluteness and Infinity, on which no speculation is possible, and the second "One" on the plane of Emanations. The Second . . . emanates from itself the seven Rays or Dhyan Chohans. In other words, the homogeneous becomes the heterogeneous, the "Protyle" differentiated into the Elements. But these, unless they return into their primal Element, can never cross beyond the Laya, or zero-point.

The Worlds, including our own, were of course, as germs, primarily evolved from the ONE Element, in its second stage—("Father-Mother," the differentiated World's Soul, not what is termed the "Over-Soul" by Emerson), whether we call it, with modern science, Cosmic dust and Fire Mist, or with Occultism—Akasha, Jivatma, divine Astral Light, or the "Soul of the World." No world, as no heavenly body, could be constructed on the objective plane, had not the Elements been sufficiently differentiated already from their primeval *Ilus,* resting in *Laya.* The latter term is not a synonym of Nirvana. It is, in fact, the Nirvanic dissociation of all the substances, merged after a life-cycle into the latency of their primary conditions. Our Kosmos and Nature will run down only to reappear on a more perfect plane after every Pra*laya.* The LAW for the birth, growth, and decay of everything in Kosmos, from the Sun to the glow-worm in the grass, is ONE. Substance, or that which is substance to our spiritual sight . . . exists everywhere and forms the first Upadhi (foundation) on which our solar system is built. Outside the solar system it is to be found in its pristine purity only between the stars of the Universe, the worlds already formed and forming; those (worlds) in *laya* resting meanwhile in the bosom of Substance.

The "imperishable Laya Centres" have a great importance, and their meaning must be fully understood if we would have a clear conception of the Archaic Cosmogony, whose theories have now passed into Occultism. At present, one thing may be stated. The worlds are built

neither *upon,* nor *over,* nor *in* the Laya centres, the zero-point being a condition, not any mathematical point. It may serve to elucidate the meaning if we attempt to imagine a neutral centre—the dream of those who would discover perpetual motion. A "neutral centre" is in one aspect the limiting point of any given set of senses. Thus, imagine two consecutive planes of matter as already formed, each of these corresponding to an appropriate set of perceptive organs. We are forced to admit that between these two planes of matter an incessant circulation takes place; and if we follow the atoms and molecules of (say) the lower in their transformation upwards, these will come to a *point* where they pass altogether beyond the range of the faculties we are using on the lower plane. In fact, to us the matter of the lower plane there vanishes from our perception into nothing—or rather it passes on to the higher plane, and the state of matter corresponding to such a point of transition must certainly possess special and not readily discernible properties.

The seven laya centres are the seven zero-points, using the term Zero in the sense that chemists do, to indicate a point at which, in esotericism, the scale of reckoning of differentiation begins. From the Centres, *beyond* which esoteric philosophy allows us to perceive the dim metaphysical outlines of the "Seven Sons" of Life and Light, the Seven Logoi of the Hermetic and all other philosophers, begins the differentiation of the elements which enter into the constitution of the solar system. When *Fohat* is said to produce Seven Laya Centres, it means that for formative or creative purposes, the GREAT LAW (Theists may call it God) stops, or rather modifies its perpetual motion on seven invisible points within the area of the manifested Universe. "The Great Breath digs through Space seven holes into Laya to cause them to circumgyrate during Manvantara" (Occult Catechism). We have said that Laya is what Science may call the zero-point or line. It is the realm of absolute negativeness, or the one real absolute Force, the NOUMENON of the Seventh State of that which we ignorantly call and recognize as "Force." Or again, Laya is the noumenon of undifferentiated Cosmic Substance which is itself unreachable and unknowable to finite perception; the root and basis of all states of objectivity and subjectivity too; the neutral axis, not one of the many aspects, but *its centre.*

When a planet dies, its informing principles are transferred to a *laya* or sleeping centre, with potential but latent energy in it, which is thus awakened into life and begins to inform itself into a new sidereal body.

In the same way the "Monads" or Egos of the men of the seventh Round of our Earth, after the globes of our planetary chain, parting with their life-energy, will have informed and thereby called to life other laya centres destined to live and act on a still higher plane of being—in the same way will the Terrene "Ancestors" create those (future Races) which will become their superiors. The assertion that all the worlds (Stars, planets, etc.)—as soon as a nucleus of primordial substance in the *laya* (undifferentiated) state is informed by the freed principles of a just *deceased* sidereal body—become first comets, and then Suns to cool down to inhabitable worlds, is a teaching as old as the Rishees.

The circle and the point, diagrammatically, form the symbol of the sun, the life-centre of the particular spot of the Kosmos in which we find ourselves. The circle is the sphere, and the point its focal centre or *laya-point,* the Eye of Osiris, the lens, the window in the Ark of Life as it floats on the waters of Space and looks upward to the Creative Light of the firmament above (within). The sun as a cosmic and radiant centre is a laya-point which forms the gateway between the inner Space, which to us is dark and unknown, and this outer space which is filled with those radiant vibrations that we partly see or feel, which are built into the circling globes, and the myriad forms that people them; the phenomenal vibrations we call light, heat, electricity, etc. But as the "Root of Life is in every drop of the Ocean of Immortality," the symbol of the sun applies to each life-centre, however small, to every cell in animal or vegetable life, to every radiant life-point in both the Microcosm and the Macrocosm. The term "point" must not be understood as applying to any particular point in Space, for a germ exists in the centre of every atom. . . . The lotus-seed contains within itself a perfect miniature of the future plant, which typifies the fact that the spiritual prototypes of all things exist in the immaterial world before those things become materialised on earth.

Everyone knows what the Caduceus is, already modified by the Greeks. The original symbol—with the triple head of the serpent—became altered into a rod with a knob, and the two lower heads were separated, thus disfiguring somewhat the original meaning. Yet it is as good an illustration as can be for our purpose, this *laya* rod entwined by two serpents. Verily the wonderful powers of the magic caduceus were sung by all the ancient poets, with a very good reason for those who understood the secret meaning.

THE PRINCIPLES OF THINGS

THE search for truth requires looking into the principles of things. There is no other guarantee against being ceaselessly self-deceived by appearances. Science is continually seeking principles to explain the multitudinous facts of observation and experiment. Undoubtedly a measure of success is attained. The limited modes and often misconceived bases of search, however, as often fall short of truly fundamental and eternal principles of Nature and Man. In *Discovery, or the Spirit and Service of Science* (Macmillan & Co., 1919), Sir Richard Gregory observed that the path of scientific discovery is "strewn with dead and dying hypotheses." This is just as true today as it ever has been.

The acquired knowledge of honest science is not to be decried. But there is a distinction between speculation and knowledge. There is also that which lies beyond the ordinary concept of knowledge. Apart from ethics, science is soulless. Metaphysically and ethically considered, science can be a powerful ally of Theosophy. This cannot be even intuited while speculations are confused with correct observations, so that the one obscures the true significance of the other. And motive for acquiring knowledge, and the use to which it is put, have more to do with really knowing than is generally even suspected. The ever increasing abuses of science, along with practical uses, present a problem the true significance and outcome of which are often overlooked. Much of this may be due to the fact that knowledge of divine Nature and the destiny of the Soul is largely eclipsed. "But," as the Adept author of *Light on the Path* once said, "the scientific workers are progressing, not so much by their own will as by sheer force of circumstances, toward the far line which divides things interpretable from things uninterpretable. Every fresh discovery drives them a step onward. Therefore do I very highly esteem the knowledge obtained by work and experiment." It is necessary, however, to distinguish clearly between what is knowledge and what is not. Otherwise the way becomes obscure.

Instances of how discovery upsets assumption, speculation, and even prejudice, are very numerous. One of them is the overthrow of the so-called "principle of parity." A supposedly firm pillar of modern physics was the proposition of the German philosopher Gottfried Wil-

helm von Leibniz to the effect that "two states indiscernible from each other are the same state." This is not so absurdly simple and self-evident as it may appear. What is really discernible and what not? And who is to draw lines of demarcation between the two? A careful examination of Leibniz's proposition in the light of Theosophy reveals that it has been supported, at least in its generally accepted form, by a too materialistic point of view. Theosophy, recognizing a sevenfold constitution of Nature and Man, knows that distinctions which may not be outwardly perceived can be readily discerned on inner planes of being. While modern physics does not yet openly recognize this principle, it has nevertheless taken some steps in the right direction by becoming more profoundly concerned with what it regards as discernible and what not, even if still in a very limited way. Thus, it is theosophically significant that modern physics now regards as one of its strongest and most fruitful assumptions that absolute space, time, and direction are among the indiscernibles. Yet these concepts are both unavoidable and "fruitful" as regards what is discerned.

The overthrow of "parity" has theosophically significant implications. As a so-called "law," conservation of parity is explained by mathematical concepts relating to the relative motions, directions, etc., of "particles" in the atomic world. Without going into elaborate explanations and details it may be sufficient to note that if a change in sign of any one of three factors determining the wave motions of particles does not change the wave function, it is said to have "even" parity. If reversal of the sign of a variable does change the wave function, it is said to have "odd" parity. Thus, parity could be even or odd. The parity of any given system has been regarded as always conserved.

Mathematical aspects of these concepts were plain enough. But in the face of new discoveries certain assumptions on which they were based became open to question. This questioning was done by two Chinese investigators—Tsang Dao Lee of Columbia University and Chen Ning Yang of the Institute for Advanced Study. How often has it not been found that while reasoning may be correct, false premises lead to erroneous conclusions? In this case, the premises were based on assumptions devoid of a knowledge of the ultimate constitution of matter. Thus, two newly discovered "strange" particles of the atomic world called "mesons" were found in the course of time to disintegrate; one, called "tau," into three particles—"pi mesons"—and the other, called "theta," into two particles likewise termed "pi mesons." What

baffled these investigators was that in every property, except the mode of decay, the two particles appeared to be identical. This violated conservation of parity, which said that if the products of disintegration were different the particles must be different also. Yet no difference could be found between them except their mode of decay. While it cannot be accepted as a dogma that there was no difference, none was observed. There may have been an undetected difference, or there may not have been any, in reality. However that may be, "conservation of parity" appeared to break down and was overthrown.

The real significance of the overthrow of parity is not yet generally understood. It is actually a victory for occultism. The different behavior of these particles, seemingly identical except in their mode of decay, is theosophically as clearly explainable as the different behavior of the infinitesimal "lives" that become either "creators" or "destroyers" according to the impulse given them by *intelligence*. Science may yet discover more subtle mechanisms by which to "explain" the behavior of atomic particles, but it will never discover their real causes by mechanical instrumentation. The real causes being in fact metaphysical, perception of their true nature depends upon awakening higher faculties in the soul of man and a motivation far from the exploitation of nature.

Abuses in the name of science tend to obscure the real nature of true science itself. Sometimes it is thought that these are an inevitable concomitant of science, justifying its condemnation. The confusion, however, is no less a mistake than to condemn fine music because of much that goes in its name. Corrupting comics do not make all writing useless, or we would not have classical or even theosophical literature. Because much "psychology" is erroneous and silly does not make all psychology so. The value and effectiveness of natural hygiene and hygienic correctives may be obscured by countless "wonder drugs" palmed off as medical cure-alls instead of the poisons that they are. No matter in what direction we may look, shams conceal the real, but are no reason for condemning the good and true. Military, and mercenary abuses of science have nothing to do with real science itself, however "great" the attempt to exploit it in one way or another. And if Theosophy is the synthesis of all true philosophy, science and religion, then from this point of view it helps no one to confuse the issue. This does not mean that everything is given out in "the books," or that no one can discover anything that "book theosophists" do not already

know. On the contrary, it is said of the Theosophical Adepts themselves that "they investigate all things and beings." This is something worth thinking about.

It can be a sobering thought for the would-be occultist to ponder well that observation of the author of *Light on the Path* which says: "The pure artist who works for the love of his work is sometimes more firmly planted on the right road than the occultist, who fancies he has removed his interest from self, but who has in reality only enlarged the limits of experience and desire, and transferred his interest to the things which concern his larger span of life." The same principle applies in many ways. It might even be paraphrased in such words as these: The pure artist, scientist, philosopher, psychologist, musician, horticulturist, archaeologist, explorer, astronomer, etc., who works for the love of his work is sometimes more firmly planted on the right road than the nominal Theosophist—if the latter be opinionated.

Science, in its higher aspects, is becoming in some ways more truly religious than modern religion. On the other hand, in its lower phases, so-called "science" and its misapplications, military, medical (including vivisection), etc., constitute the "black magic in science" about which H.P.B. warned. These abuses are a crime against life and humanity. Thus "two paths" go in opposite directions. It is a repetition of the "history" of bygone ages. Theosophy throws light on these two paths. Its aim is to encourage all on the way toward the genuinely good, true and beautiful in universal and individual Life. It is not enough to point out evils alone—real or imaginary. This might even accentuate them. The way of the true needs to be understood, expounded, and above all exemplified. Then far greater significance will be seen in Krishna's affirmation: "There is no existence for that which does not exist, nor is there any non-existence for what exists. By those who see the truth and look into the principles of things, the ultimate characteristic of these both is seen."

LIVING THE LIFE

CERTAIN fundamental elements of learning are necessary in order to know any subject: first, the study of the subject, or theory; second, application of the theory, or practice. Particularly does this apply to Theosophy, as Theosophy is a philosophy of life embracing man's entire nature, spiritual, mental, psychical, physical.

Theosophical students are often frightened at the amount of "theory" required to obtain any theosophical knowledge and use as a pretext for not studying the fact that "it is all so difficult." Yet the real difficulty lies not so much in the theory (even though H. P. Blavatsky did state that Theosophy is not for the mentally lazy or obtuse) as in the application, or practice—for the Masters say that "he who lives the life will know the doctrine." That is, unless a theory is *used* there can be no real knowledge. The familiar phrase "living the life" might be read "living the lives." These "lives" are also called "elementals." The object of this article is to consider not only the important part the elementals play in the application of the philosophy, but also the relation they bear to the amount of theoretical study required.

The philosophy presents a few ideas which are basic to this subject. Life is One, made up of separate units, or lives, each possessing consciousness and intelligence in varying degrees. These units, or particles, are given other names such as elementals, skandhas, and, on the higher planes, Monads. But on whatever plane they manifest, they reflect that portion of the Universe which their level of intelligence permits.

Man, a Soul using various bodies, incarnates life after life for two purposes: first, to learn; second, to teach and raise to higher levels of conscious intelligence the lives, elementals, which form the lower kingdoms. The biblical phrase Spirit, Soul, Body, loosely expresses the more definite theosophical classification of Man's seven principles.

We might consider Spirit as the Power which Man as "Perceiver" expresses in Thought, Will, and Feeling. In *The Secret Doctrine* these are grouped under Mind, man's principal instrument. This power is magnetic; and when focused upon a subject or object exerts a pulling, attractive force or, conversely, a repellent force—depending upon the

type of elementals employed. Like and dislike are the emotions directing this power; the one tending to attract; the other, to repel.

Let us analyze the role elementals play in this drama of "living the lives." Elementals are the lives drawn from the elements of fire, air, water, and earth. In their natural state they are pure, unmixed with any quality other than that of their own element. The Ancients named them salamanders, gnomes, sylphs, undines, etc. They are a part of the evolutionary stream and in time will merge with the human qualities of self-conscious will and choice. Each elemental, as it coalesces with our thought, is influenced by the quality of the thought, gaining a line of direction which it tends to take thereafter. Our difficulties, sorrows, ignorance, are to a large extent the result of the action of elementals which have been affected by our wrong or ignorant intents. We swim in an ocean of elementals which cling to us like barnacles, impeding our progress when selfishly directed. The elemental lives produce health or disease; they can benefit or poison the entire life.

When elementals combine with thought, another named is used——*skandhas.* Our present character, sex, family, environment—our *true* "inheritance"—are the result of the *skandhas.* When these are weak or degraded, it is due to our treatment of the elementals in past lives. Conversely, when the former personality has been unselfish, wise, altruistic, a fine character results.

Elementals may be considered from another point of view as the chemical constituents of biological man. When wrongly used, they produce deadly poison; rightly used, they become health-giving. Feelings of worry, anger, resentment, and the like, combining with a "pure" elemental, result not merely in a poisonous thought, but actually produce a physiological change which can poison the blood. (The late Dr. Alexis Carrel, for example, said that emotions can cause organic lesions.) Feelings of love, sympathy, compassion, on the other hand, permit the presence of pure skandhas in the nerves and blood stream, thus offering no obstruction to the working out of our highest motives. This partially explains the Eastern psychological method of metaphysical healing, as well as the phenomena of mesmerism and magnetism. This power, emanating from certain people, may heal. Their elementals have been nurtured in the atmosphere of an unselfish nature—the nature of a real physician. Even a glance from such a person carries healing power.

Though the qualities of anger or sympathy, love or hate, are expressions of our feelings, they are not "we"—the real Man or Soul. Thus we can control and direct these expressions, can master any stream of elementals, or we may become their slaves. To illustrate: the food we eat, vegetable or animal, when assimilated, is built into the flesh of our bodies, the marrow of our bones. When that food is clean and healthful, it will eventually build a clean and healthy body, a body which can more readily be used in the service of others; for when a body is diseased, it curtails our efforts in that direction. Yet, since we are not our bodies, we can make them, by the power of will or under emotional stress, perform seemingly "miraculous" feats. For example, when a house is on fire, a bed-ridden inmate may be able to rush out of the house under the power of fright. That "power" was not in the physical body, but was provided by the stream of psychic elementals which came to his aid.

We have emphasized the fact of "elemental" influence in simpler forms and lower grades of experience. It follows logically that they can also affect our minds in regard to higher realms of knowledge; for as we reflect upon some abstract conception of the philosophy, we attract those skandhas, those elementals, which we have impressed in the past, as well as those lives "educated" by other minds dedicated to high purposes. The presence of these lives tends to illumine a problem or elusive passage, and we perceive more clearly what had previously remained obscure.

Thus the theoretical study required is necessary not merely for erudition, but also in order to broaden and deepen the mind, which possesses an elastic and limitless power to know and to become. As we read and study, there takes place an automatic training and education of elemental life. We do not need to be conscious of this, and generally we are not. The rationale of the mind and elementals is somewhat analogous to an electric dynamo, involving a magnet, a conducting material, and the lines of force. We might, then, regard mind as the generator, Life as the electric field, Man as the magnet, and his principles of thought, will, and feeling as the conductors. When a man thinks, he sends forth lines of force which Science states are made up of electrons, or as we say, elementals. So we can see in this process, how, by days and years of study into the vast realms of metaphysics or the lower levels of knowledge, a man may build a world of power

and wisdom, an assimilation of mental, moral, and psychic food. This in time may produce the character of a genius or a sage.

How foolish, then, is the student who, lazy and bored with all this "tiresome" study, closes his books—perhaps his mind—and idles along in lighter, easier tasks. Today, we hear a great deal about "reducing," and give much attention to acquiring a less weighty body. But let us guard against *mind* reducing, lest we develop an inefficient, lightweight mind which, like a speck of thistledown, is blown hither and yon at the mercy of air currents and gusts of caprice or passion. The lazy, bored feeling is made up of tamasic elementals; and these "lazy" elementals cling to minds, if we permit them to, and limit the normal power of the mind to grow and expand. May this not account for such excuses as "I do not have a mathematical or metaphysical mind," or "I find no practical reason for so much theoretical study"?

In H. P. Blavatsky's time, a Professor de Morgan referred to the phenomena of invisible things which were difficult to explain, and asserted that the physical explanation was miserably insufficient. This seems quite apropos of elemental phenomena.

Any choice or decision requires the use of the will, and while the spiritual Will is the energetic, impersonal force in Nature, yet the lower, or physical will, represents man's use of that power toward personal ends. How often we are frustrated and disappointed when, having some objective in view, we call upon the will and are thwarted by an intangible opposing force entirely beyond our control! The answer is —elementals.

When we focus our thought or desires in any direction, we simultaneously arouse hordes of these "lives"—our progeny, spawn of our failures or successes. Fortunate the person whose "good" elementals outclass the "bad"! His selfless desires will enable him to help suffering humanity in whatever direction needed. An Albert Schweitzer, a Gandhi, are examples of this. Although not everyone can reach the stature of these men, nor necessarily desires to do so, yet the principle is the same. A mother's desire to help her child, a person's wish to assist a friend or acquaintance who has been unjustly treated—these are acts which the "good" elementals support.

Thus, we see that the two broad fields of theory and practice are really inseparable, as neither is "alive" without the other. Every achievement has its theory; yet *knowledge* is gained only by practice or experience. We can study the theory of swimming; but unless we

enter the water, we can never swim. The Ocean of Life is filled with adverse currents, unplumbed depths, sea monsters; and only by exploration and adventure can we learn to live in it. Having learned, we may be able to teach others, or assist another who may be near drowning, unable to keep afloat.

Every skandha is a mirror; beware lest we mistake the reflection for the *real*. Self-knowledge is the only *true* knowledge, and is acquired by one who can face life, particularly himself. Yet the elemental mirror into which we look may distort the reflection, for the mirroring elementals are clouded by our past passions, emotions, acts. As the *Voice of the Silence* says, it "needs the gentle breezes of Soul-wisdom to brush away the dust of our illusions." Only then will our mirrors reflect our Universe clearly, and open up vistas—a world of limitless possibilities and Reality for one's self and perhaps for a few others, our fellow Man.

AN ANCIENT SICKNESS

Oh, the malignity of the wrong world, that strange lust of mangling reputations, which seizes on hearts the least wantonly cruel! Let two idle tongues utter a tale against some third person, who never offended the babblers, and how the tale spreads, like fire lightened none know how in the herbage of an American prairie! Who shall put it out?

What right have we to pry into the secrets of other men's hearths? True or false, the tale that is gabbled to us, what concern of ours can it be? I speak not of cases to which the law has been summoned, which law has sifted, on which law has pronounced. But how, when the law is silent, can we assume its verdicts? How be all judges, where there has been no witness-box, no cross-examination, no jury? Yet every day we put on our ermine, and make ourselves judges—judges sure to condemn, and on what evidence? That which no court of law will receive. Somebody has said something to somebody, which somebody repeats to everybody!

BULWER-LYTTON

ON THE LOOKOUT

Buddha—and the Religion of Reason

George Allen and Unwin of London have recently again made available to the public George Grimm's *The Doctrine of the Buddha,* a book of particular interest to Theosophical students. "First written in 1926," the publishers say, "the demand has existed for some time to replace this excellent and carefully prepared work," adding: "George Grimm in his book makes a successful effort to return to the original doctrine of Buddha. Taking only those passages which have the mark of authenticity he reconstructs, like an architect restoring the blocks of a fallen temple, a complete exposition of Buddhist thought. He builds exclusively upon the sayings of Buddha and of those disciples who lived contemporaneously with him."

The Doctrine of the Buddha has the subtitle, *The Religion of Reason,* and Mr. Grimm contends that, in Buddhism, one should rely entirely on philosophical and psychological insight and never argue from any of the Buddhist doctrines developed after Buddha's death.

"Confirmation Within Itself"

Mr. Grimm's preface offers a means by which the Western student can step outside the semi-theological arguments propounded by the two rival Buddhist sects—Northern and Southern. Whatever the virtues of the Northern and Southern schools, he says, they do represent Buddha's original impartation—for the reason clearly furnished by Gautama himself:

> The Present work sets forth the *original,* genuine teaching of the Buddha. This, to be sure, is a very bold claim. But the author has an infallible criterion for it, furnished by the Buddha himself. The Buddha, in fact, calls his teaching the *dhamma anitiha,* the truth *that carries its confirmation within itself,* stands in no need of external authorization. Elsewhere the Buddha-doctrine is called, "The cognised in itself, *the doctrine of actuality to be seen with one's own eyes.*" According to this, the genuine Buddha-doctrine is a securely self-contained, *incontestable* system of iron logic, in which latter precisely is mirrored the internal evidence of the structure of the teaching. Just such an incontestable system, self-evident in itself, does the present work set forth. In doing so, it builds exclusively upon the sayings of the Buddha himself, and his leading disciples who lived

contemporaneously with him. So, then, it presents itself as the original teaching of the Buddha as surely as that there cannot be a duplicate truth.

"The Psychology of Reincarnation"

Following this modulus, Mr. Grimm establishes the fact that Buddha taught a very clear and, one might say scientific, doctrine of reincarnation, provided one develops any of the implications of his statements concerning the nature of the soul. At the time of death a certain law comes into effect which is, however, simply the extention of the thoughts and desires of the soul at that time. As Grimm puts it:

> Because the thirst for new Becoming at the moment of death, that is, upon the abandonment of the present body, thus acts entirely blindly, and for this very reason, in accordance with its innermost nature, therefore, to use a modern expression, we can say that at this moment it stands purely subject to *the law of affinity.* As a chemical substance forms a homogeneous combination only with certain other substances, but strives for this with all possible vehemence, while showing indifference towards all others, which is what we call chemical affinity, in exactly the same way there exists in every living creature at the moment of death a certain definite striving, called by the Buddha *tanha* or thirst, which striving stands in a relationship of affinity only with a certain kind of germ to which alone, therefore, it is led by grasping, from which, thereupon, the new organism results.

"The Decisive Moment of Death"

Later Mr. Grimm indicates why the dominant coloration of a man's thought at the time of death is so important in determining the environment to which the soul will next be born. Although Mr. Grimm seems to imply elsewhere that Buddha thought that the Soul might be trapped, as it were, in an animal body for an incarnation, the following is beyond any doubt the purest Buddhistic Theosophy:

> Man always becomes what he would like to become, that is, whatever he desires and thirsts after; for whatever we thirst after, that we grasp. Of course this is not to be understood as if it meant that a mere wish would be sufficient; but what has directing force, is the nature of our willing and of our desire in its innermost depth, that means, our innermost character, as it appears in action as blind impulse, without being guided by the light of knowledge. For according to the foregoing expositions, exactly in this situation is our will at the decisive moment of death, when it determines our grasping of a new germ. To know to what kind of grasping our will may lead us, we

must dive into the depths of our animal life, as it reveals itself when the dominating influence of reason is eliminated, thus, in emotion, or still more, in a state of intoxication, or in dream. Hence it is not decisive, if a person in rational reflection does not murder or steal, is neither unchaste nor heartless, but only if he is incapable of all this even in the height of passion, nay, even in his dreams.

Self-determination of Future Lives

If I must confess, after having carefully studied myself, that in a state of clear consciousness I am indeed incapable of killing, but might become a murderer in an excited or drunken state, then my will is of such sort that in the future, if unilluminated by any consciousness, it might cause a grasping of a germ and in a world where murders can be, and are, indeed, committed; and where perhaps also this capacity of will still asleep within me, under the appropriate external circumstances,—for instance, if I were born into a rude and uncultured family—might some time or other flame up again and make me a murderer. The fundamental condition for the certainty that after death I shall not become attached to a germ in a low-class, pain-laden world, is therefore this, that I know myself, at last in the hour of my death, to be definitively free from all bad inclinations. In so far as this is the case, in so far as a man has acquired confidence, virtue, experience, renunciation, wisdom, and thereby become nobler and purer and thereby more adapted to attachment in higher and purer spheres, he also has it in his own hands to bring about his rebirth in closely determined circles or spheres, be it in a powerful high-placed family, or in a world of gods.

Notes on Religion

Increasingly, during the past year, varied aspects of the religious front have been presented in newspapers and magazines. For example, the Chicago *Daily News* for Oct. 19, 1957 reported the statements of two speakers at a University of Notre Dame symposium:

The Rev. Francis X. Curran, professor of history at Loyola Seminary, Shrub Oak, N.Y., said despite the fact that religion is "more respected, more discussed and more popular than it has been for a generation, there is little indication that the revival has had any important effect upon membership in the Catholic Church." Father Curran said the 1,750,000 converts to Catholicism since 1940 can be attributed not to a religious revival but rather to "the lessening of anti-Catholic prejudice and the greater . . . prestige of Catholicism."

Dr. Will Herberg, professor of Judaic studies and social philosophy at Drew University, Madison, N.J., said the typical American has developed a remarkable capacity for "being serious about religion with-

> out taking religion seriously." Dr. Herberg said religion has been "converted into a tool for secular purposes—a man-centered cult of 'peace of mind' and 'positive thinking'."

A Room of Silence

Dr. Herberg was clearly alluding to Norman Vincent Peale and his cult of positive thinking. In his column "Confident Living" in the Chicago *Daily News* for February 16, 1957, Dr. Peale recommended the use of a "silence room" as a place in which to "be alive, quietly alive." After describing one such room, Dr. Peale remarked:

> How many homes have "silence rooms" I do not know, but many public places have rooms set aside, decorated and equipped for such private meditation. People find such rooms very helpful because in a confused, noisy, crowded, mechanistic civilization we realize that what is eternal expresses itself in silence. And we must learn to know this creative silence and to bring it into our lives. For the greater the amount of spiritually charged silence we can get into our lives, the greater sense of vigor and joy.

To What End?

Sounds good, doesn't it, though one approaching the religion or philosophy of the East from a theosophical standpoint is bound to wonder about the "decorations" and "equipment." But two other cautionary suggestions occur: First, huckstering meditation is apt to have some of the same results as huckstering God—followers become more impressed by the promoter than by what he is allegedly promoting. Second, Dr. Peale has certainly let it be known that all the religious exercises he recommends are supposed to bring in a full measure of health, wealth and psychic satisfaction. Meditation, as understood by the Theosophists, is concerned with no such ends, and one therefore wonders if the conversion of techniques of meditation to the presumed service of self is not, in effect, a sort of watered down "black magic."

Ethical Imperatives

At a more scholarly level, we find Dr. Peter Munz, of Victoria University, Wellington, New Zealand, writing on "Relationship and Solitude" in *Philosophy East and West* for July, 1956. "Ethical imperatives are not understood as the commandments of God in Hinduism," says Dr. Munz, "because the deity is not a person, and is, therefore, not capable of a relationship with man—[and] love is a relationship between two persons. . . . The release, in Hinduism, always consists in spiritual attainment, not in man's response to infinite love."

Cross-fertilization of Ideas

The following comparisons which Dr. Munz makes will, we think, show why Theosophy is more faithfully mirrored in the Eastern approach:

> The following Christian doctrines are examples of views which are, in the Christian context, almost wholly unintelligible. Many Christians believe that those who are regenerated cannot sin, that is, once a man is reborn in Christ, no matter what evil he does, his salvation is assured. This amazing doctrine has always presented a very intricate problem to Christian thought, and attempts have been made to prove that no such doctrine is actually implied in Christian teaching. But none of these attempts has ever been sufficiently successful to prevent a return to this standpoint. The hard and unassailable core of the question seems to be that man cannot save himself through his own efforts. Salvation is a divine gift, and its infinite value cannot stand in any measurable relation to any finite, human effort. Therefore, salvation, in a very fundamental sense, is independent of human effort. In a sense, men are predestined; and, if not predestined, the lives they lead do not stand in any necessary relationship to their salvation. Even St. Thomas, the strongest exponent of the efficacy of natural powers, faculties, and law, had to retain the notion of predestination in some form.

Hindu Doctrine Throws Light

"It is doubtful if this idea of the meaning of salvation is intelligible in a purely Christian context," says Dr. Munz. "A sinner is a sinner, and can never be justified as a sinner. But with the help of the Hindu doctrine of complete withdrawal and identification with *Brahman,* this doctrine can be illuminated. In the light of Hinduism, it does not mean that a man has been elected by God for salvation but continues in the meantime his earthly existence with all its sinful inclinations. It means that a man has become holy through the complete extinction of all desire and inclination. Hence, he has become incapable of committing a sinful act." Dr. Munz continues:

> Similarly, Hindu notions can throw much light on the very intricate conceptions of Christianity in regard to salvation as the reward for goodness. The very notion of such reward in the after-life is apt to detract from the intrinsic value of a good action and hence the whole doctrine seems, in a purely Christian setting, self-contradictory. But the Hindu theory of *karma* can throw much light on it. According to this theory, all actions have their consequences. There is no after-life in the sense of heaven or hell, but there is an after-life in the

sense that the consequences of actions are certainly not wiped out by the death of the person who has committed them. It is in this way that the doctrine that there is reward and punishment after death should be understood.

HINDU PHILOSOPHY CLARIFIES FURTHER

The foregoing argument seems inadequate, however, without its companion doctrine of reincarnation, which Dr. Munz nowhere mentions, thus leaving a philosophical void. He continues in this vein:

As to the Christian prayer, "Thy will be done," its proper meaning can be better understood in the light of Hinduism than in the light of any Judeo-Christian notion about man's will as the creature of God. In the same way, St. Paul's *"Vivo autem, iam non ego"* can be more readily understood in terms of the Hindu doctrine. It refers to the death of the empirical ego and the birth of the *atman,* the true self, which is identical with *Brahman.* It is much more difficult to understand it in terms of the Judeo-Christian conception, according to which man's self is created by God, and according to which the search for the death of that self must be a rejection of the divine gift. One can help one's understanding, of course, by remembering that that self is the self after the fall, i.e., the self that consists of pride. Thus, the death of pride makes room for the birth of our true self. But even then it is still difficult to understand how the birth of the true self can amount to the birth within man of the spirit of Christ, for according to Judeo-Christian conceptions, man and God are distinct. Only the conceptual framework worked out so clearly by the Hindus can explain why St. Paul's pregnant statement is in fact a plausible description of redemption.

Dr. Munz concludes by saying that "any genuine meeting of the two traditions must result in new ways of thought. It must be a meeting in which both sides abandon the absoluteness of their deepest insights—a meeting in which the reception of the alternative insight will be a painful, self-denying process."

IMPACT OF SCIENCE ON RELIGION

Omar Garrison (Los Angeles *Mirror-News,* April 4), reviewing Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan's recent address at the California Institute of Technology, paraphrases and quotes Dr. Radhakrishnan:

The impact of science on religions of the world is bringing all faiths closer to one another. . . . Every religion is undergoing certain modifications because of the recent advances in science. Such self-analysis was good, Dr. Radhakrishnan said, and warned that religion is often too dogmatic, science too empirical.

"We must try to adopt the freedom and spirit of adventure of science and make them a part of our religion," he declared. "Without such freedom, religion chokes man."

At the same time, he cautioned scientists that they should not "make a theory of that which goes beyond all theories" . . . the nature and soul of man.

Science Encroaches on Religion

In making the point that "science is not only a description and classification of facts; it also includes the interpretation of its findings," Dr. Radhakrishnan says:

And when science interprets, it enters the field of philosophy and religion. Then we must ask: is the development of "God men"—those who rise above creed and race and stand alone as those who have transcended space and time—is this to be put down to mere accident?

Can we say that the first chapter writes the second, or the second the third? When we look at the outside world with its constant flux, its progression, any man with any sensitivity is moved to great reverence.

But when we turn inside, we are aware of the noncontingent. As Paschal said, "Assert the reality of your subjective," ask what constitutes the nature of the human individual. To find that is to find the kingdom of God within us.

A Fundamental Inquiry

Mr. Garrison continues:

Drawing from his own faith, Hinduism, Dr. Radhakrishnan pointed out that one of the scriptures of that religion opens with the statement that it is "an inquiry into the absolute."

Such an inquiry, he concluded, should occupy scientists as well as religionists.

"We use the word karma to mean the object series which may bind a man. But we have also Nirvana, in which man overcomes that series through his own freedom.

Western Emphasis Scientific

In *East and West* (the publication in book form of Dr. Radhakrishnan's Beatty Memorial Lectures in Montreal), Dr. Radhakrishnan states the common ground of science and religion, and suggests that science curtails too soon its empirical investigation of experience:

Both religion and science affirm the unity of nature. The central assumption of science is the intuition of religion that nature is intelligible. When we study the processes of nature we are impressed by

their order and harmony and are led to a belief in the divine reality. . . .

Science is empirical; it is non-dogmatic. It is open-minded. Religious truths which are commended to us should not be mixed up with incredible dogmas. They must be based on experience, not of the physical world but of the religious reality. Even the concepts of science acquire their validity in experience. Experience is not limited to perceptual experience or the data of introspection. It should take into account para-normal phenomena and spiritual insights.

RATIONAL THINKING APPLIED TO SUBJECTIVE EXPERIENCE

Dr. Radhakrishnan continues:

If scientific truth is what works in experience, religious truth also can be put to the same test. If we take the raw material of human nature and process it through detachment, humility and love, knowledge of God is attained. Religious exercises are intended to produce religious results. Albert Schweitzer observes: "Rational thinking which is free from assumptions ends in mysticism." . . .

The way to this spiritual change is through detachment which develops the qualities of truth and honesty, chastity and sobriety, mercy and forgiveness. So long as we are dominated by our own passions and desires we will flout our neighbour, never leave him in peace, build institutions and societies which mirror our violent impulses, aggression and greed.

THE RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

We reach the deepest vision into the nature of the Real by devotion, contemplation and detachment. The basic element in religion is not the intellectual acceptance of dogmatic principles or historic events. These are but the preparation for the experience which affects our entire being, which ends our disquiet, our anguish, the sense of the aimlessness of our fragile and fugitive existence. . . . We pass from darkness to light. We feel caught up in a universal purpose. Our being is integrated, our solitude is ended. We are no longer the victims of the world around us but its masters.

NATURALISM AND SUPERNATURALISM CONTRASTED

In *Philosophy East and West* for April, 1956, Robert Rein'l discusses "Naturalism and Supernaturalism in East and West" from an essentially theosophic viewpoint, showing that these opposing philosophical concepts are not held exclusively within geographical boundaries. He cites the Carvakas as examples of Eastern naturalists, noting that their ethics is "an egoistic, but non-utilitarian, form of hedonism; momentary pleasure alone has value," whereas, in many Western forms,

naturalism is "progressive and systematic." Dr. Rein'l attempts to define the supernatural:

> If there is something besides Nature—which seems to be presupposed by the term "supernatural"—is the knowledge of it different from the knowledge of Nature? The point is frequently made that divine knowledge is superhuman, but the question is, in what sense? Is the supernatural merely what is beyond ordinary comprehension? In this case, the practical results of electronics would be supernatural from the point of view of primitive man. If there were no such discrepancy, "supernatural" would be without application. Suppose there is a gulf that cannot be spanned. But the distinction should not be made in terms of individual capacities. A man may truthfully judge that a comprehension of relativity theory is beyond him, yet it makes sense to him to think that others comprehend it. Supernatural he would put beyond the capacities of man, but not beyond the capacities of all beings. Suppose that there are two types of beings and two types of knowing. It becomes necessary to consider the relationship of these beings as knowers.

Nature of Supernaturalism

After discussing various ways of "conceiving the object of supernatural knowledge," Dr. Rein'l considers examples from Eastern thought:

> The *Bhagavad-Gita* provides a clear example of the distinction between natural and supernatural from the point of view of knowledge. "Knowledge of the Field and Field-knower, This I hold to be (true) knowledge." It is Krishna who is the "Field-knower in all Fields." To distinguish between the Field and the Field-knower is the highest form of knowledge. Conversely, the failure to distinguish between them is ignorance. The Field includes all, and more than some would take as categories of existence. There are the elements, the ego, the intellect, the unmanifest, the ten senses and the mind, and the five objects of sense; also, desire, loathing, pleasure, pain, the aggregate, volition, and firmness. Wisdom, on the other hand, includes the exercise of the moral virtues, particularly detachment, absence of the I-faculty, constancy in the knowledge of the spirit, and insight into the end of knowledge.

The Object of Knowledge

> The object of knowledge is beginningless *Brahman*. It cannot be comprehended; this suggests that it is not an object of discursive knowledge. It is undivided, although seemingly divided. It is knowledge, the object of knowledge, and the goal of knowledge. That there is no distinction between the object of knowledge and the goal of knowledge is what one would expect of non-discursive or

intuitive knowledge. If the goal were distinct, then the object of knowledge would be conditioned, something to be judged on the basis of its being a means to an end. There is also no distinction between knowledge and its object; again, this is characteristic of intuitive knowledge. Moral discipline is involved in the conception of knowledge. This is a subtle point.

SUPERNATURAL STANDPOINT IN BUDDHISM

Dr. Rein'l expresses the supernatural standpoint in Buddhism as follows:

> Ignorance is the basis of all evil, and the eradication of ignorance is the way of deliverance. This is the doctrine of dependent origination, of the twelve links (*nidanas*). To be in ignorance is to be incapable of distinguishing between true and false or right and wrong. To see through the delusion produced by ignorance is a vision both noetic and moral. It is Right Understanding. It is also what gives point to the moral virtues developed on the path. There is thus, on the one hand, a center of reference and, on the other hand, what has significance in relation to the center. From the standpoint of the center there is nothing else. . . . But from the relative or mundane point of view there is a distinction between meritorious and non-meritorious in thought and deed.

A MATTER OF TEMPERAMENT OR CHARACTER?

While the naturalist, Dr. Rein'l believes, is inclined to be intolerant of supernaturalism, the supernaturalist "does not regard naturalism as meaningless to the empirical consciousness"—he simply "does not take the empirical consciousness as ultimate . . . [and] the decision must depend largely, although not entirely, on his character." Thus, we can see that Dr. Rein'l's development of these opposing concepts is distinctly theosophical, recognizing, as he does, the validity of the empirical approach within the realm of objective nature, yet also recognizing its limitations when applied to a boundless Universe. Dr. Rein'l concludes:

> The primary characteristic of the devotee of the supernatural is spirituality. This expresses itself, on the one side, as indifference to fortune, detachment, and, on the other, as universal love. The primary characteristic of the devotee of naturalism is a love of adventure; those who have this characteristic must always have problems to solve —completeness is anathema to them. These two positions are in conflict, but their conflict is not always recognized. Failure to recognize it does not remove it, nor does the prescription of the course of inquiry in one of the opposed directions. Recognition of the conflict is the primary function of the intellectual conscience in East and West.

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